CONSULTING PRACTICUM

SOCIAL SCIENCES APPLIED INNOVATION LAB

SOSC 444

SYLLABUS ***2018-2019***

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students in the School of Social Sciences' Consulting Practicum (previously the Applied Innovation Lab) learn the elements of problem solving in the business environment. Students interact with businesses or non-profit organizations that partner with Rice to seek creative solutions to challenges they face. The course offers experiential learning on all project phases from investigation and analysis through presentation of recommendations designed to meet real-world needs.

Consulting Practicum students have the opportunity to –

- design solutions that can be implemented to improve an organization's success
- develop an understanding of the nature and process of consulting with organizations
- develop skills in consulting fundamentals, including navigating teamwork challenges
- collaborate with our partners to achieve real-world, real-time objectives, on schedule
- gain experience in problem-solving, strategy, and other analytical skills
- think critically to evaluate the relevance of available information and resources
- make reasonable judgments based upon evidence, taking into account uncertainties and unknowns
- practice and sharpen executive writing and presentation skills

1. FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION

Faculty Lead/ Academic Supervisor	Lawrence P. Hampton, J.D. Lecturer, School of Social Sciences 713-521-9125; hamptonlp@gmail.com Sewell Hall (Office hours by appointment)
Administration Liaison:	Alex Wyatt Assistant Director, School of Social Sciences' Gateway 713-348-2181; alex.wyatt@rice.edu Sewell Hall

2. COURSE STRUCTURE

The course draws on elements of traditional lecture, class discussion, and workshop sessions to introduce students to the consulting process, which includes

1. understanding a client's needs and the opportunities that the project presents,
2. developing proposals,
3. gathering data and performing research with which to analyze a business problem,
4. analyzing data and concepts, and developing and testing hypotheses within a relevant framework (such as a competitive analysis or a financial or conceptual model),
5. formulating findings, conclusions, and recommendations,
6. developing management presentation and support materials, and
7. presenting recommendations designed to meet the needs of an executive audience.

Instructor Profile
Lawrence P. Hampton consults in communication strategy in the legal environment. He is a Lecturer in the Managerial Studies program of Rice University and is the faculty advisor for the Rice Consulting Club. His previous experience includes serving as a Lecturer in the Jones Graduate School of Business and work with students in the Baker Institute's Jesse Jones Leadership Center Summer Internship Program. He has also guest-lectured in Rice University's Cain Project and in the Business Law program of the University of Houston's downtown campus, on such topics as securities law, privacy rights, and intellectual property issues for entrepreneurs, in addition to communication issues.

Along with his academic teaching, Professor Hampton regularly consults with clients in the business and legal communities on communication issues and practices, and provides counsel on business law matters as well as estate planning and succession issues. He consults with companies and individuals on the presentation of their positions in the varied contexts in which they can arise, from the courtroom to mediation, and other business settings. He combines his experience in problem solving, interviewing, and factual analysis with an interest in helping clients achieve their objectives efficiently and clearly.

Lawrence Hampton's business law consulting encompasses contract interpretation and negotiation, licensing and other intellectual property issues, regulatory compliance, and cases involving complex financial transactions and accounting problems. He has assisted clients in defining the objectives of their partnering arrangements with other companies, and providing the appropriate legal structure for those arrangements consistent with the client's overall business objectives and strategic planning. He has also served as an expert witness in controversies involving contract interpretation.

Professor Hampton has authored legal handbooks, treatises, and articles for professional journals. He is the recipient of a number of writing awards and honors. He holds a J.D. from Case Western Reserve University Law School where he served on the Law Review as an executive editor, and an A.B. with special honors from The University of Chicago.

Alumni Mentors
Distinguished alums of the School of Social Sciences and outside professionals may be available to offer their insight and experience to students in the Consulting Practicum and to serve as mentors on projects as their schedules permit.

Types of Projects Offered by Our Partner Organizations
The projects to be staffed for this course have involved varied sectors of industry, activity, and analysis, including the following:

- Economic Analysis
- Education
- Healthcare
- Marketing
- Public Policy
- Technology
- Communication
- Operations
- Strategy

3. COURSE SCHEDULE

Consulting Phase 1: Preliminary Project Work

Week 1 – Intro to consulting engagement phases; projects offered

Session 1 – Introduction to Projects and to Phases of Consulting

Session 2 – Partner Organization Day

Week 2 – Project assignments; clarifying the problem and scope of your project

Session 3 – Preparing for Your Initial Meeting

Consulting Phase 2: Proposal Development

Week 3 – Project assignments; clarifying the problem and scope of your project – cont'd

Session 4 – Project Challenges, including Ethics Issues; and Project Proposals

Week 4 – Finalizing the proposal and preparing for the proposal meeting

Session 5 – Interactive Session with Mentors

Session 6 – Analytical Tools and Frameworks Consultants Use; Elements and Uses of Literature Reviews

Week 5 – Presenting your proposal to your client

Consulting Phase 3: Project Work Phase

Week 6 – Launching your work plan; investigation and data collection

Session 7 – Data Gathering/Interviews and Survey Basics

Week 7 – Project work phase continues: investigation in progress

Session 8 – Interactive Session with Mentors

Week 8 – Project work phase in progress; Using effective visual design to communicate your ideas

Session 9 – Visualization of Data/Graphics

Week 9 – Project work phase in progress

Session 10 – Interactive Session/Project Review with Mentors

Week 10 – Perspectives on Consulting as a career path/ Project work phase in progress

Session 11 – OwlConnect Luncheon (Optional) (Fall session)

Week 11 – Presentation of project status for critique of thesis/approach

Session 12 – Project Preview Presentations to Mentors

Consulting Phase 4: Presentation of Recommendations

Week 12 – Formulating Your Recommendations

Session 13 – Elements of Project Reports, and Writing for an Executive Audience

Week 13 – Formulating Your Recommendations – cont'd

Weeks 14 & 15 – Presenting Your Recommendations and Reflecting on Your Experience

Session 14 – Presentation of Recommendations to Client